

DATE: March 11, 2011

TO: Barbara Ross, Deputy Director
Department of Planning and Zoning

FROM: Nathan Randall, Planner
Department of Planning and Zoning

SUBJECT: Special Use Permit #2011-0004
Administrative Review for Minor Amendment
Site Use: Private School
Applicant: Saint Coletta's School by M. Catherine Gibbs
Location: 207 South Peyton Street
Zone: OCH/Office Commercial High

Request

Special Use Permit #2011-0004 is a minor amendment request to increase the maximum number of students at Saint Coletta's School from the current 75 to a total of 90 students. Although the applicant also anticipates extending the school day from the current 8:30am - 3:00pm to 8:00am – 5:00pm, this change does not require further SUP approval the prior SUP approval did not limit the hours of operation. No other changes to the operation are proposed in this application.

Background

Prior to the subject building being constructed, BZA Case #5261 was approved in 1986 for a parking variance to allow all parking spaces to be compact in size and to allow for a narrower drive aisle. On June 25, 1996, City Council approved Special Use Permit #96-0088 to operate a private school for mentally handicapped and disabled children and young adults. Since that time, the school has changed its operation at this location and now provides services such as life and vocational skills training to disabled adults only. The applicant also reports that fewer employees are on premises each day as a result of this change in student type.

A small retail shop, open occasionally to the public during the holiday season, is also located on premises.

In November 2010 staff visited the subject property as a part of its routine inspection program and found one violation of Special Use Permit #96-0088 regarding the number of students at the school. The applicant subsequently filed this minor amendment request.

Community Outreach

Public notice was provided through eNews, via the City's website, and by posting a placard on the site. In addition, the Upper King Street Neighborhood Association was sent an e-mail with information about the current application. Staff has received one

comment from the property manager of a neighboring residential condominium property, who objected to the minor amendment based on general concerns regarding traffic and adequate pick-up and drop-off and a specific concern that vans and buses have blocked the condominium driveway.

Parking / Pick-Up and Drop-Off

The applicant satisfies its parking requirement with the provision of 48 parking spaces, 33 of which are located on-site. The applicant leases the remaining 15 spaces off-site.

The school uses its parking lot as well as a loading zone on South Peyton Street for the pick-up and drop-off of students, who arrive at the school via vans, small buses, or private vehicles. The applicant states that the school has dedicated two to three employees, including a transportation coordinator, to supervise the orderly pick-up and drop-off of students to ensure that no vehicles block driveways to other properties.

Staff Action


Staff does not object to the minor amendment request. The proposed increase from 75 to 90 students represents a 20% increase, consistent with Section 11-511(2)(b)(i)(c) of the Zoning Ordinance regarding eligible minor amendment requests.

Staff has added conditions to this report that are consistent with current standard language regarding matters such as litter and employee parking. Recognizing concern from the neighboring condominium, staff has also amended and added conditions regarding the pick-up and drop-off of students. Existing Condition #4 has been amended to require the applicant to provide a pick-up and drop-off plan in addition to documentation of off-street parking spaces available for the use. The required plan will help to prevent any conflicts that might arise with the increase in the number of students at the school. Staff has also included condition language (Condition #7) requiring the applicant to designate, as it is has already started to do voluntarily, at least one employee to coordinate the orderly pick-up and drop-off of its students and to ensure that no vehicles block access to any other property.

Staff hereby approves the Special Use Permit request.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION - DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING:

Date: March 14, 2011
Action: Approved



Barbara Ross, Deputy Director

- Attachments: 1) Special Use Permit Conditions
2) City Department Comments
3) Statement of Consent

CONDITIONS OF SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2011-0004

The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the following conditions are adhered to at all times. Violation of any of the conditions may result in fines and/or referral to public hearing by the Planning Commission and City Council.

1. The Special Use Permit shall be granted to the applicant only or to any entity in which the applicant has a controlling interest. (P&Z) (SUP#96-0088)
2. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** No more than ~~75~~ 90 students shall be permitted at the school at any one time. (P&Z) (~~SUP#96-0088~~)
3. No more than 65 staff members shall be permitted at the school at any one time. (P&Z) (SUP#96-0088)
4. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** The applicant shall submit and maintain a pick-up/drop-off and parking plan to the satisfaction of the Directors of Planning and Zoning and Transportation & Environmental Services which (a) confirms that there are a minimum of 48 off-street parking spaces available for school staff and visitors at all times that the school is in session and (b) demonstrates how both drop off and pick up for all existing and additional new students will be accommodated without impacting adjacent properties. (P&Z) (~~T&ES~~) (~~SUP#96-0088~~)
5. The applicant shall contact the Crime Prevention Unit of the Alexandria Police Department for a security survey for the school. (Police) (SUP#96-0088)
6. Lighting in the garage shall be provided at a level acceptable to the Police Department and the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services. (Police) (SUP#96-0088)
7. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** The applicant shall designate at least one employee, and more employees as necessary, to supervise student pick-up and drop-off at the beginning and end of each school day and to assure that no vehicles used for student transportation block access to neighboring properties to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning & Zoning. (P&Z)
8. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** The applicant shall conduct employee training sessions on an ongoing basis, including as part of any employee orientation, to discuss all SUP provisions and requirements. (P&Z)
9. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** Trash and garbage shall be placed in sealed containers which do not allow odors to escape and shall be stored inside or in a closed container which does not allow invasion by animals. No trash and debris shall be allowed to accumulate on site outside of those containers. (P&Z)

10. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** Litter on the site and on public rights-of-way and spaces adjacent to or within 75 feet of the premises shall be picked up at least twice a day and at the close of business, and more often if necessary, to prevent an unsightly or unsanitary accumulation, on each day that the business is open to the public. (T&ES)
11. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** All loudspeakers shall be prohibited from the exterior of the building, and no amplified sounds shall be audible at the property line. (T&ES)
12. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** Supply deliveries, loading, and unloading activities shall not occur between the hours of 11:00pm and 7:00am. (T&ES)
13. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** The applicant shall require its employees who drive to use off-street parking and/or provide employees who use mass transit with subsidized bus and rail fare media. The applicant shall also post DASH and Metrobus schedules on-site for employees. (T&ES)
14. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** The Director of Planning and Zoning shall review the Special Use Permit one year after approval and shall docket the matter for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council if: (a) there have been documented violations of the permit conditions which were not corrected immediately, constitute repeat violations or which create a direct and immediate adverse zoning impact on the surrounding community; (b) the director has received a request from any person to docket the permit for review as the result of a complaint that rises to the level of a violation of the permit conditions, or (c) the director has determined that there are problems with the operation of the use and that new or revised conditions are needed. (P&Z)